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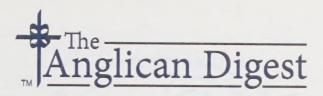
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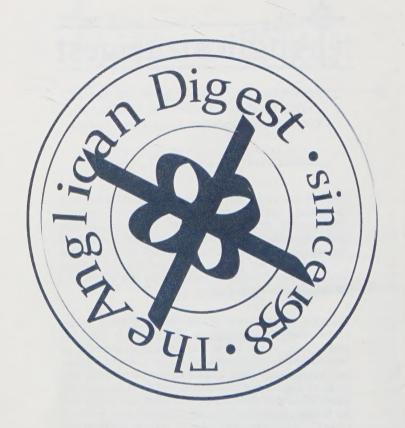
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Founded in 1958 by the Rev. Howard Lane Foland (1908-1989), our heritage is "Prayer Book Catholic," and is open to the needs and accomplishments of all expressions of Anglicanism: Anglo-Catholic, Broad, and Evangelical. Thus, TAD does not cater to any one niche or segment of the Church, but finds its enduring ethos in serving the Church, including her clergy and lay leaders, those theologically educated and "babes in Christ." Each issue, therefore, is unique, representing a mixture of themes for a varied audience, including emerging ministry ideas for clergy and laity, devotional and historical material, as well as humor and news briefs from around the Communion.

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THE ANGLICAN DIGEST
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FROM THE EDITORS

"I'm going to close my eyes. Let me know when the bad bit is over." Most of us have heard this line, or even spoken it at the movies or when watching a drama.

Many Christians emulate this during Holy Week. Palm Sunday is bearable, despite the long narration of the Passion, because one can jump to Easter, the "Happy Ever After" end, sing all those jolly hymns, and then go home for a good meal. Maundy Thursday and Good Friday can be left to the super holy. Who needs to hear and participate in a human sacrifice? After all, we have lives to live.

Sacrifice is not the offering of death. It is the offering of life. When we contemplate our Lord's death and passion at every Eucharist, we are driven in faith to blurt out, "and here we offer and present unto

thee, ourselves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy and living sacrifice unto thee." As Isaiah said, "Here am I, send me."

We hope our theme in this Lent/Easter edition will inspire you to keep a holy Lent, Holy Week, and Easter. Do share the Digest with your friends, leave a copy at the hairdressers or in the doctor's office, and nag your priest or vestry to enroll your parish in the Parish Partner Plan so all parishioners may receive it.

We seek to select contributions from people who write primarily for lay people, in vivid and accessible language. We encourage you to send us your writings. We are very grateful to our authors.

Christ has died. Christ is Risen. Christ will come again.

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LENT AND SPRING

The Rev. Virginia Bennett St. Charles, MO

Some people love Lent, to one degree or another, and I am one of them. I say, "to one degree or another" because as a teenager and young adult I wasn't responsible for Lenten liturgies. I wasn't the one who had to make sure all the "i's" were dotted and the "t's" were crossed. I didn't have to proof endless orders of worship trying to make sure that all was as it should be. I was the recipient of other clergy's work. I soaked up the beauty of Lenten somberness, the solemnness of it all, even as a teen-ager, in a way that fed me and led me into the mystery of holiness that has stayed with me all my life. So how can I, or anyone, recapture or discover, even for the first time, the beauty of Lent?

Because of Lent's somber character, it has often seemed

incongruous to me that the very word "Lent" means "Spring." When I think of spring, I think of the beauty of the sun, the warmth it brings after winter's chill and dark days that can seem endless. I don't think of "Lent."

At times, it seems as though the church is experiencing one long, endless, Lent.

There is a tiredness and malaise that has taken hold of many people in today's mainline denominations, and Episcopalians are not excluded from that malady. The pews are emptier than they were even ten years ago, congregations are grayer, children less numerous. Some of that, so I have heard, is simply the fact that there are fewer children of a certain age right now. Regardless of the reason, it still makes us wonder what the future holds; for the church and for us as people who try to walk the Christian

path. The future seems far less dependable than in the past although, no matter the generation, no matter the century, the future is always unknown.

And perhaps here is where the word "Spring" comes into play when it comes to Lent. Regardless of what struggles the world has seen, regardless of whatever struggles I have seen personally, every year—yes, every year, since the time I was born—spring has burst forth; with life and color, warmth and blessing. Lent and spring are inseparable because God's promise is trustworthy.

So perhaps Lent is the time when we not only need to name what kind of winter we pray that God will free us from; whether physical, mental or spiritual, Lent is the time when we settle into a mode of quiet hopeful waiting. Psalm 130 speaks to that waiting

with a clarion call: "Out of the depths have I called to your O Lord; Lord, hear my voiced let your ears consider well the voice of my supplication."

Redemption is all about God's desire to bring all that is dark within us, all that is dark in the world, to renewed and glorious life; just as every spring floods the earth with newness of life. And our separation from God (sin) shall be past and we shall know again how deeply we are loved.

That is a Lent worth welcoming. So perhaps the fact that Lent means "Spring" is not so strange after all. May we all take that journey anew, that God might bring us to newness of life—in every way that we need.

LENTEN REFLECTIONS

THE REV. H. ELIZABETH BACK BOWLING GREEN, KY

Have you ever been in love with someone who was not in love with you? Embarrassing isn't it? Not only is it the stuff of great movie-making, but it's the theme of many Old Testament prophets like Hosea, my favorite. God uses Hosea to complain about how rotten God's people treat him. In 5:12 he complains, "I am like maggots to Ephraim, and like rottenness to the house of Judah. God's heart aches as he recounts how much he loves his people even without reciprocity in 11:1,3-4:

When Israel was a child I loved him ... It was I who taught Ephraim to walk, I took them up in my arms; but they did not know that I healed them.

I led them with cords of human kindness, with bands of love. I was to them like those who lift infants to their cheeks. I bent down to them and fed them.

A Short Prayer

Lord, I'm sorry I don't cherish or honor you the way you cherish and honor me. I treat you wrong. Forgive me. Keep those cords of kindness wrapped tightly around my heart and lead me to your cheek. Amen.

A Longer Prayer

Unrequited, or more accurately, "RE-requited" love is the theme of God in Christ and it's made plain in this prayerful sonnet by John Donne.

Batter my heart, three-person'd God, for you As yet but knock, breathe, shine, and seek to mend; That I may rise and stand, o'erthrow me, and bend Your force to break, blow, burn, and make me new. I, like an usurp'd town to another due, Labor to admit you, but oh, to no end; Reason, your viceroy in me, me should defend, But is captiv'd, and proves weak or untrue. Yet dearly I love you, and would be lov'd fain, But am betroth'd unto your enemy; Divorce me, untie or break that knot again, Take me to you, imprison me, for I, Except you enthrall me, never shall be free, Nor ever chaste, except you ravish me.

+

The word became flesh and dwelt among us. John 1:14

For my Lenten discipline I made a long list of prayers. Everything from thanksgivings to confessions, to fears, to hopes. I laid by the window where the sun rises. I want the Son to touch each submission with his light. So far my prayer for lengthening light is being answered. Being illuminated is uncomfortable. I knew some of that dark stuff was ugly (that's why I kept it in the dark). But I am thankful to relinquish comfort for a sense of freedom in God's forgiving grace. Poet George Herbert best explains what I mean:

from The Temple (1633), by George Herbert:

Judgement.

Almighty Judge, how shall poore wretches brook
Thy dreadfull look,
Able a heart of iron to appall,
When thou shalt call
For ev'ry mans peculiar book?
What others mean to do, I know not well,
Yet I heare tell,
That some will turn thee to some leaves therein
So void of sinne,
That they in merit shall excell.

But I resolve, when thou shalt call for mine, That to decline,
And thrust a Testament into thy hand:
Let that be scann'd.
There thou shalt finde my faults are thine.

The word became flesh dealt with us according to his loving kindness. Thanks be to God.

+

The Vernal Equinox is the time when the planets tell us that it's officially spring. I am keeping my snow boots handy because I am suspicious of winter. Sometimes it covers precious tiny new buds in ice. I've always marveled at how the harshest season is that in which the most fragile flower petals emerge. How do these petals survive? If you're a botanist, please tell me. My theory is the lengthening light. The budlings store every ray of light that touches them down to the roots. When the cold

CONNECTING

snaps or the frost bites they have a reserve of warmth from which to draw strength. But I'm not a botanist. I'm a Bible reader. I know Jesus said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life" John 8:12. I'm counting on his "Easter-y" brightness to go ahead and dawn on my Lenten darkness now. I am sure Easter will be a wonderful celebration. But this fragile, icy heart of mine is grateful that his light shines in all seasons.

Let him easter in us, be a day spring to the dimness of us, be a crimson-cresseted east,

More brightening her, rare-dear Britain, as his reign rolls,
Pride, rose, prince, hero of us, high-priest,
Our hearts' charity's hearth's fire, our thoughts' chivalry's throng's Lord.

The Wreck of the Deutschland by Gerard Manley Hopkins

To the happy memory of five Franciscan Nuns, exiles by the Falk Laws, drowned between midnight and morning of Dec. 7th, 1875.

+

Coming to Terms

The Lord is full of compassion and mercy; O that today you would hearken to his voice.

This combination of Psalm 103:8 and 95:7b has been my "mantra" for Lent because it was the opening antiphon for Morn-

ing Prayer the day after Ash Wednesday. And it made me feel tired. Right out of the gate. It was the second day of Lent and I was already discouraged. Because I know I don't listen. God and I have already come to terms about how I struggle with listening to what he says. I just don't. He does plenty of talking. And sometimes I even hear him—far more often than I care to admit. I don't want to admit that I hear his voice because I often disregard what he has to say. (I've also come to terms with both my shame and God's forgiveness of such brash disregard). I hear, but don't take his voice to heart. See, I know from previous experience that once his voice gets to my heart his voice will change my heart. And I'd rather not change, thank-youvery-much (I've also come to terms with my hard-heartedness and God's ability to get his work done despite that).

That's why the translation that uses the word 'hearken' both discourages me and warms me. I NEED NEED this prayer. Just because I know I'm not going to do it doesn't mean for a minute I'm not going to pray it. And pray it all day long! Confused? Me too. But that's how it I've been trained to pray by a lifetime of Bible reading. Scripture contains the stories of humans who struggle, often unsuccessfully, to hearken to God's voice. His voice continues. As does his compassion and mercy. With a weak grip I hold on to that still small shred of a whispered hope that somewhere between his voice and my scarred tympanic membrane he and I can connect. O please, let it be today.

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SERVICE AND SACRIFICE

THE REV. ANDREW NUSSEY TORONTO, ONTARIO

well-beloved priest and scholar, the late ▲ Fr. Robert Crouse, was a master at offering depth of wisdom and at the same time ease of understanding in the material he presented. For instance, Father Crouse taught how the Scripture lessons appointed for use at the Holy Eucharist in the Book of Common Prayer lay out for the faithful the two-fold logic of the season of Lent. The first half of the season is primarily concerned with exposing and expelling the demons within us. The second half focuses on our being filled with good and holy sustenance for our souls—out with the old life, in with the new!

This ancient structure of the season assists us in under-

standing the nature of the soul. This two-fold movement should not be thought of strictly as one of linear succession, however: there is no clean time-split between exclusive soul-cleansing on a certain number of days, to be straightforwardly followed by a reconstituting of the soul on the days of the season remaining. This is not how the spiritual life works; rather, it is one and the same movement.

Other layers of meaning can be built upon this structural foundation. I find it meaningful, for instance, to conceive of life and death as two aspects of one and the same reality. As we die to self, we live for God. But wait! If you are like me, you will be immediately (and prematurely) repelled by this notion. "Die to self?" Is religion and faith in God about dreary self-denial? Am I compelled by a gloomy God to sacrifice pleasure in his name? And "live for God?" Does

God need me to be a doting servant and slave in order for him to deign to be pleased with me? From this caricature of perspective, it is no wonder God is discarded by so many. Perhaps I will hold onto my so-called demons, thank you very much! You can keep your Lent.

Obviously, I need to dig deeper. Obviously, my little self is afraid to be abandoned to life itself, and as a result I become defensive, insular, and self-referential (it's all about me and my perceived needs!). Rejected as a heretic by some, lauded as a visionary by others, the Franciscan priest Fr. Richard Rohr offers in his book, Breathing Under Water: Spirituality and the Twelve Steps): "Most of us no longer enjoy a sacred consciousness in our world, and Sunday services do not appear to overcome this. We really are disconnected from one another and the divine, and are thereby unconscious. Religion's main and final goal is to reconnect us (*re-ligio*) to the whole, to ourselves, and to one another—and thus heal us." In other words, the task and purpose of religion—its language, its ways of being, its rituals—is to bring us into life. If religion fails to do this, our religious structures are not true.

If our task is really to have our inner divisions healed and to be reconnected by wholeness into wholeness, our initially small perspective can have a broader and better scope. Demons are deceptive untruths that have taken our true selves captive, barring good parts of ourselves from emerging into the light of wholeness: our humanity and our divinity are fragmented and held prisoner. Our inner lives need liberating, and we cannot come to know liberation by merely enacting external exercises of devotion in the context of public worship services or by

other means. Externals have their place, to be sure, but the internal life is paramount and the point of any external signs and symbols. The outward should point us inward, which points us upward to the God who comes downward!

To live for God is to truly live for ourselves, and we must come to know what that really means. In effect, our liberation from our demons wakes usit makes us more consciousand thus our liberation allows us to live more alive for God. for one another, and for ourselves: it is all one and the same life. Sacrifice is therefore not a cutting off of ourselves, but rather sacrifice cuts the lifeless cords which hold us down from emerging into life: sacrifice does not lop off what is good for us in favour of something dreary and worse, but rather it is liberation that moves us closer into our fullness. The service of God is, at the same time, service to self.

When we connect with God's Spirit we better connect with our own spirit and with our own life.

Correspondingly, true service of self also serves God, and our service of others serves both God and self. It is all one and the same service. By employing a larger spiritual lens than we are accustomed to seeing through, we can finally see the oneness of everything; of all that is.

God wants your sacrifice and he wants your service because he wants your life, and he wants you to want your life. God is your life! God wants you to sacrifice the deadwood, to cut it off, and to serve life which is your joy and his as well. May this Lent be a true vehicle which draws us deeper into the life of God and more broadly into the Easter joy!

GUEST QUARTERS

AT HILLSPEAK

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THE WAY OF SACRIFICE, THE WAY OF LOVE

THE RT. REV. MATT GUNTER DIOCESE OF FOND DU LAC

A started watching what I ate and began exercising to lose some weight and get into better physical shape. There is no easy way to get in better shape. I have had to become acquainted with a sort of self-denial and sacrifice. I don't eat all that I would like. Exercise requires a sacrifice of time and exertion.

The process has also been instructive spiritually: I have come to a new appreciation of the wisdom of the ancient practice of fasting. Our ancestors taught that, because it is so basic to our lives, self-denial in our eating was the foundation of other more significant self-denials. Let's face it: the very idea of sacri-

ficial self-denial cuts against the grain of our society. We are an affluent and indulgent people—and Christians are as indulgent as anyone else. Sacrifice and self-denial are not in our vocabulary. Why practice sacrificial self-denial, and to what end?

The reason for my self-denial and discipline in eating more carefully and exercising is to be physically healthier; the same is true if we are serious about pursuing spiritual health. It is easy to be distracted and bloated by things that do not lead us into the mercy and delight of God or enable us to more fully love our neighbor.

Classically, the Seven Deadly Sins have been the diagnostic tool to assess our spiritual health. We are not encouraged by the culture around us to exercise the sacrifice of moderation when it comes to Pride, Anger, Envy, Sloth, Greed, Gluttony, or Lust. Indeed, most advertising encourages over-indulging in each of them.

Three of the deadly sins—gluttony, greed, and lust-have to do with indulging our physical appetites. Classically, gluttony refers not only to overeating but being finicky or obsessed with what one eats or eating mindlessly and ungratefully. When we confess our sins. does gluttony come to mind? Greed is being dissatisfied with and ungrateful for what we have and grasping for newer, bigger, and more stuff. The proliferation of "Gentlemen's Clubs" is just one sign of our culture's indulging of lust. Almost anything can be advertised appealing to our lust. We have become inured to its presence in our lives. When did we decide that greed, gluttony, and lust were no big deal? Each of those creates such spiritual static in our lives that we should not wonder that it can seem difficult to hear the still small voice of God calling in our hearts.

Greed, gluttony, and lust are basic, but there are deeper, more deadly sins. My lack of discipline, ungratefulness, and excessive eating have been reflected in those areas of my life as well. I suspect I am not alone.

Are we indulgent when it comes to pride? Far from denying it, in our celebrity society, we celebrate it. We are infatuated with our own self-importance and self-sufficiency. Or we indulge in fantasies of our own uselessness and worthlessness, which is a different sort of self-absorption. C. S. Lewis said, "Humility is not thinking less of yourself but thinking of yourself less." If we think of ourselves less, we can think of God and others more, but we are often full of ourselves.

Are we indulgent when it comes to envy? You know that twinge of resentment when some good comes to another? Or what about the other side of envy, when we rejoice when something bad happens to those we dislike or with whom we disagree? Isn't that tasty? Tasty, but not good for you. Are we willing to sacrifice the pleasure of envy?

We indulge in anger and malice. We almost celebrate it. We feel free to say or write the most disdainful things about others Snarkiness has become so common as to be unremarkable. And we carry ill-will toward others without a qualm, feeling self-righteous in our anger and resentment. Passive-aggressiveness is a form of anger, as is the bitterness, resentment, and malice we sometimes store in our hearts toward others. What about the impatience with which we engage people whom we find difficult or just

inconvenient? Holding onto old slights and hurts? The unwillingness to love those who we have identified as enemies? Are we willing to sacrifice the satisfaction of anger?

Sloth is what keeps us from exerting the effort to deny ourselves for the sake of God and others-it just takes too much effort. Or, we run around filling our lives with busyness to avoid doing so. We indulge in being spiritual and moral couch potatoes. In Dante's Purgatorio, those who are being purged of their sloth exhort one another with: "Faster! Faster! We have no time to waste, for time is love. Try to do good, that grace may bloom again." If we are content with being spiritually out of shape, we will not have the stamina to follow Jesus in his way of self-sacrificial love.

In Lent we take on extra disciplines of self-denial to work a bit more at denying ourselves and getting ourselves in shape. The disciplines of Lent are not meant to be unusual but are supposed to be an intensification of disciplines we practice all year. Classically, there are three self-denying disciplines that are understood to be basic in getting us in shape:

Prayer: Prayer and worship are sacrifices, inasmuch as it means sacrificing some time and attention. It is meant to de-center us and reorient us away from ourselves to the things of God.

Fasting: This is meant to get our biological desires under control—and not just eating. Fasting is the foundation of other sacrifice. Indulging our every bodily desire makes it impossible to deny ourselves in the more important "spiritual" matters.

Almsgiving: Given the way money and wealth mess with our minds and hearts, and how we confuse our sense of self with how much stuff we have, this is critical. Certainly, giving to help those in need is an essential means of practicing compassion. But the letting go of our wealth is an outward and visible sign of our giving away some of ourselves.

If we intend to be serious about it, we will look at ourselves and admit our excesses. We will not indulge our gluttony, greed, or lust. We will not indulge in our pride, anger, and envy. We will not be content with spiritual flabbiness. We will seek ways to deny ourselves as we follow Jesus in the way of sacrificial love—the way into the life and love of God.

A CHRISTIAN Mother's Sacrifice: Lattes, Pedis & Prayer

Sierra Rix Philadelphia, PA

Sacrifice sounds so old school. What about me? My needs? My wants? What about what I deserve? According to magazines, commercials, and popular mom blogs, to be a good mom and wife I need to take "me time" and make sure my needs are met. According to conservative Christianity, I should love God and my neighbor. Quite honestly, I agree with both statements. They are not mutually exclusive; it all comes down to application and implementation.

Sacrifice is a slippery slope. It is simple to sacrifice the last piece of cake or cup of coffee, or to get out of bed in the middle of the night (again) to tend to the baby, who is cry-

ing (again). Having sacrificed, I find it all too easy to step a little heavier, to sigh like a jilted Victorian heroine. I excel in grumpy, curmudgeonly sacrifice. I'd sarcastically say, "it's a gift" but some might think I was serious.

Sacrifice is one of those little tricks God set up for us (not that I really think that—or at least not most of the time); an opportunity to do the right thing, but all too often done with the wrong motivation or attitude; kind of like going to church and feeling superior to all the folks who "call themselves Christians" who couldn't drag themselves there, too.

Being a Christian, wife, and mother all involve some form of sacrifice. For some, that is appealing, perhaps the first step on the stairway to martyrdom. I struggle. A lot. There are days I want to stay in bed rather than chase short

people around to do chores, schoolwork, play nice, remember their manners, clean up their toys. Wifing is hard work too. I don't always have a lot to give after wrangling kids all day. My husband gets home and wants to *gasp* talk to me, or worse, be intimate. The nerve. Don't get me started on God. How can I be expected to reflect on God in all his glory when I rarely run to the bathroom without someone chasing me down? Church is certainly not a time to bask in his glory. Not while I'm playing whack-a-mole with four of the five kids wiggling, twitching, and whispering in the pew next to me.

Seriously. There are days when I think the greatest sacrifice I make, my greatest triumph, is getting out of bed in the morning.

I'd be a much better Christian and it would be so much easier to worship, love, and parent

if life was peaceful. If my kids never yelled, if my husband never needed, if God could just expect nothing more than my feet hitting the floor in the morning. Were that the case, I'd be an awesome Christian, a super sacrificer—mostly because I wouldn't have to do anything hard. I find living real life, with all its beauty and trials, very challenging. I am struggling through this life of an adult convert who feels slightly behind the Christianity learning curve, the life of a priest's wife, and mother to five, soon to be six, kids.

But here is the rub: the deeper I fall into my faith, the more I have realized how little choice we truly have, and how profoundly wonderful a gift sacrifice truly is. If I take a moment to consider what I believe to be my options, I most often choose what makes life easier or more convenient to me. If I take a moment to pray (while hiding furtively for a

few silent minutes), there is a better chance that my actions will be more godly and my actions much less self-serving. Choice equals walking away from God; prayer keeps you on the straight and narrow.

Sacrifice-true Christian sacrifice—is taking care of yourself as you care for your faith, your spouse and your children. When my two youngest come racing into to my room at the very unfriendly time of 6:15, my choice response is to hide under the pillows, but prayerful response is to be thankful for the blessing of being a Christian mother. I am thankful for the opportunity to witness their growth as Christians, to bear the cross that such occasions afford. The load can be heavy. I make jokes about how hard it can be, but the small, quiet sacrifices we make draw our hearts closer to God. More often than I care to admit, sacrifice really does translate into "me

time," into taking care of myself; it's just not as glamorous as a pedi and a latte. Both of which I quite enjoy!!

Sacrifice is a gift for willing growth of godliness or an opportunity to paint a worldly picture of martyrdom. Every day, my life as a Christian, a wife, and a mother provide me with ample opportunity to either choose the image of a modern day mother martyr or to joyfully embrace this life as a child of God, wife of a loving godly man, and mother of (we hope) godly children.

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CALLED TO SACRIFICE

Melissa R. Kilmer Cambridge, MA

I pulled the front door closed behind me with a r let out an audible sigh as thud. At 5 a.m. it was still dark out, and I was headed to work. As I teetered in my high heels toward my car, already regretting my choice of shoes for the day, I was trying to remember if this was the second or third day this week that I left the house this early. It didn't really matter, though, because my house was empty. My husband and our two kids were in Idaho visiting my inlaws. I just started a new job a few months ago and couldn't take the time off from work to go with them.

As I made the 45-minute drive to my office through the fog, I wondered, how I morphed into a stereotypical 1950s husband? I am not quite sure how it happened but that is how I felt, as if I were Don Draper in a pencil skirt, stressed out and exhausted (but without the alcoholism and philandering). Unlike Don Draper who seemed to relish in putting all of his energy and emotion only into his work, I didn't have a choice. I reached for my keys as I approached the government building and headed up to my office. The clack of my heels against the tiles echoed through the long, empty hallways. I switched on the fluorescent overhead lights as I reached my desk and booted up my computer. Here I go again, but why?

Until this year, I have always viewed practicing law as a real privilege. I have dedicated my career to public service, trying to do my part to provide high quality legal service to low income people. But that was a choice I made 13 years ago, before I was married and became a mother to a daughter

then, four years later, to a son. My time as an attorney has had me mired down in other people's problems for so long that all I wanted to do was retreat to my own. My son, almost two, doesn't know his shapes or colors. My daughter would be reading independently if I could spend more time practicing with her. Our house was always completely disorganized and the piles of laundry seemed to multiply while we sleep. I felt like I was neglecting the truly important things and people in my life and I had enough. Why do I have to sacrifice all this time, the one thing that I can certainly never get back?

Just as my emotional bottom was about to fall out and who knows what would have happened, I got a message from my former Assistant Rector and current friend asking me if I would be willing to write something up that he could publish about sacrifice.

I know that he has plenty of friends that he could have tapped to write something but the Holy Spirit had him reach out to me. Maybe he thought of me because I once told him a story about when I was a Legal Aid attorney and I paid out of my own pocket for my client to stay at a hotel for five nights.

My client showed up from Arizona for her child custody hearing on a one-way ticket, pregnant, with no money, no place to stay, and not knowing a soul in this area. It was Christmas and that was probably the last time she saw her kids for a long while. I told my priest that I was so frustrated because I couldn't even enjoy doing a nice thing for these kids by allowing them to have time with their mother because I felt so manipulated by their mother's complete irresponsibility. My priest told me that obeying God doesn't guarantee us a feel good experience. Sometimes our obedience requires sacrifice. My sacrifice came in the form of \$541 charged to my credit card from the Holiday Inn Express.

But that is not why the Holy Spirit had my friend contact me now. The Holy Spirit intervened because I needed to reflect and pray about what I believe I am currently being called to sacrifice. Maybe I am being called to "sacrifice" this time simply because I can. I have a loving husband who takes great care of our happy, healthy children. Maybe God put me in the State's Attorney's Office prosecuting domestic violence cases and helping rehabilitate delinquent juveniles because that's where he wants me to be. I am not sure of what God's will is for me but I know that I will continue to seek it.

There are sure to be many more early mornings trying to

get paperwork done while the office is quiet and many more late nights waiting on a jury's verdict. I am sure to forget to send in the money for picture day at school and sure to feel the sinking dread of having to leave a sick kid on the couch watching cartoons as I head to court. In those moments, I will first probably complain (let's be honest) but then I will give thanks that I have the time to give.

LIGHTS! CAMERA! ACTION! A LIFE OF SACRIFICE AND SERVICE

THE REV. KEITH A. VOETS IRVINGTON, NY

had never heard of Mother Delores Flatt 2012 Academy Awards, when I saw her walking the Red Carpet. While I am not one to pay much attention to who does or does not walk that famous carpet, the sight of a nun in full habit having her picture taken by hundreds paparazzi sparked my attention. I discovered that that nun was Mother Delores Hart, O.S.B., of the Abbey of Regina Laudis in Bethlehem, Connecticut. She was attending the award ceremony because a film about her life was nominated for Documentary of the Year. Surprisingly, the red carpet was not a new experience for Mother Delores. The lights and glamour of

Hollywood were once a part of her life. In her early twenties, Delores Hart was one of the brightest young movie stars and was made famous by giving Elvis Presley his first onscreen kiss in "Loving You." She had a promising career and was expected to establish herself as an A-list starlet, but she abruptly left Hollywood. In 1963, she entered the abbey of Regina Laudis as a novice. Mother Dolores has remained as a member of that community ever since, offering hospitality and direction to those who come to her community seeking God.

Delores Hart gave up a life that many can only dream of: fame, fortune, and glamour. She seemed to have it all, and yet, realized she did not. Delores Hart, pulled by the Holy Spirit, decided to sacrifice it all so that she could serve God through a life of humility, poverty, prayer, and hospitality. In leaving Hollywood, she

left behind a family that ridiculed her decision, a fiancé whose heart was broken, and a plethora of fans who could not comprehend why anyone would leave a life of luxury for a life of hard work. But leave a life of luxury Mother Delores did, and she continues to live a life of service to God to this very day.

For many, the idea of having to sacrifice anything, let alone a life full of worldly success and riches, is beyond our comprehension. We are taught that the sacrifice of money, power, comfort, or almost any of our desires is a sign of weakness. At the same time, we are encouraged to sacrifice relationships, family, and our spiritual lives in order to build our resumes with earthly accomplishments. The idea of sacrificing anything for God or our neighbor is very much discouraged. Selfishness has infected our world so dramatically that instead of asking "what can I give up for God," we are almost constantly asking, "what does God have to give me?"

What we forget is that God already has given us something, and that is the greatest gift of all: his son Jesus Christ, who suffered death upon the cross for our eternal salvation. God made the ultimate sacrifice, and in doing so he taught us the power of putting love for others ahead of love for self. Sacrificing our own wants and desires to serve a greater good is a powerful practice, but it isn't always a popular one.

Modern Christians don't always like to talk about sacrifice. In the age of "nice" we have become too scared to discuss the idea that God may have expectations of us. Instead we have created a God of our own design; one that bears a closer resemblance to a genie in a bottle than any

image of the God we actually found in scripture. This is a God who gives us exactly what we want without our needing to let go of a single thing. The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, the Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ, is no genie. Our God is a God who has poured out his grace upon his creation and asks for comparatively little in return. But just because God does not require equal sacrifice does not mean we should not be willing to offer to him all we have and all we are.

As disciples of Jesus Christ, each of us is called to sacrifice regularly for the mission of God. What we are called to sacrifice may differ, but we are all called to let go of something, or perhaps many things, for the sake of the Gospel. We may not be called to take the vows of a religious community and live a cloistered life like Mother Delores, but each of us must be willing

to let go of our own wants and wishes, and follow where the spirit calls us. Through the power of prayer and the guidance of the Holy Spirit, what we must sacrifice will be revealed to us. What is revealed today may not be the same thing that is revealed tomorrow, but we can rest assured that anything we are being called to sacrifice is merely an obstacle standing in the way between us and God.

We are not promised a life of ease by following Christ; we are promised forgiveness of sins and eternal life. Those promises must be obtained by sacrificing our own wishes for those of God. The necessity of sacrifice as a fundamental part of a life lived in God is an idea that has been understood by many saints throughout the ages, and even the occasional Hollywood movie star.

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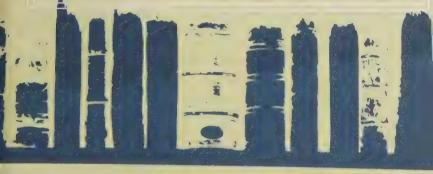
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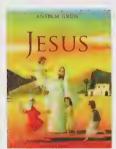
Julia Roberts on the red carpet at the Oscars. Lady Gaga singing "Applause" to worshipful fans at sold-out concerts. And all of us in our Sunday best in the front row at church. What do we have in common? Chances are, we all suffer from vainglory—a keen desire for attention and approval. In *Vainglory: The Forgotten Vice*, DeYoung tells the story of this

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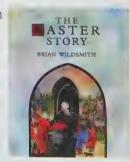
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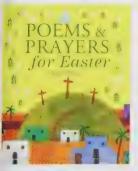
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SACRIFICE

THE REV. ANDREW PETIPRIN ORLANDO, FL

hen I was fourteen years old, deep in the thrall of nondenominational Christianity, I reproached my uncle for giving up something for Lent. "It's so legalistic," I told him. God wants us to know Him personally, not keep him distant in ritual and discipline, my young mind reasoned. "I hate your sacrifices," God tells his people through the prophet Amos. "I desire mercy, not sacrifice" he says to Hosea. A couple of years after my pseudo-righteous pronouncement, however, I was completely adrift from the Lord, desiring to serve him but unsure how even to approach him. I had thrown out sacrifice and mercy had gone out with it too. Eventually, I discovered that sacrifice may be detestable as an end in itself, but as a means

to the knowledge and love of the Lord, it is indispensable. In fact, it is really all there is.

Real sacrifice is open to and infused with grace. In the film Chariots of Fire, the Olympic runner and Presbyterian missionary Eric Liddell discovers that he is slotted to run a qualifying race on a Sunday. Earlier in the film, he has admonished a young boy playing soccer on the Lord's Day. To Liddell, the temporary abandonment of work and play is a sacrifice that keeps his priorities straight: God first. This becomes apparent when he is confronted by a committee that includes the Prince of Wales, gathered to convince Eric to go against his convictions and run in the 100-meter heat. One of the committee members reveals the tragedy of living as if principled sacrifice can be abandoned: "In my day, it was king first, God after." Eric Liddell's resolve provides an avenue of

grace that touches the hearts of people who would otherwise have celebrated an athletics spectacle without much thought to God. If not king first, it would certainly have been sports first. One of Liddell's competitors hands him a note before he finally races for a gold medal in another event: "It says in the Old Book, he who honors me, I will honor" Countless souls have been touched by the power of God down to the present day because Eric Liddell decided to forgo some personal and national prestige.

Liddell was not practicing his piety before men; neither should we worry unduly as we put God first in sacrificial living. There is, after all, only one true sacrifice, and we are invited to share in it. We are not claiming any victory of our own, but celebrating Christ's triumph over sin and death. To obsess about "legalism" is not to worship the God-

man who fulfilled the Law. To imagine grace without sacrifice is not to take up our own crosses and follow him. We learn this lesson over and over again in the Holy Eucharist, the Church's regular sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. We give out of the poverty of our sinfulness, and yet the Lord, "whose property is always to have mercy," (BCP, p. 337) gives us back more than we can ask or imagine. Eric Liddell's victory is the Lord's, and each of our sacrificial acts likewise becomes a vessel for God's mercy to be poured out on the world.

Our whole lives may in this way become Eucharistic. Christ has been offered as our sacrifice once and for all, and we live each moment to keep the feast of his Passover. Giving something up for Lent, taking on extra acts of service, or heightening our diligence in prayer, are a part of this big picture. We deserve no cred-

it. Our odds do not increase among imagined heavenly bookmakers. We simply play our part in a story that long precedes us and will likely continue on long after we are at rest in Christ. Only then may we experience the full honoring by God that Eric Liddell's competitor believes is coming for those who sacrifice for the sake of his kingdom. We simply learn that if our hope is to become like God on Resurrection day, we must become as he was on Good Friday.

How wrong I was so long ago to dismiss the spiritual discipline and ritualistic observance that would later draw me more deeply into the heart of faith. When I kept my first Lent, I experienced the most joyous Easter of my life. The God that I had been told was far removed from outward displays had, because of such displays, revealed his presence in my heart. The God that I had believed to be hostile to

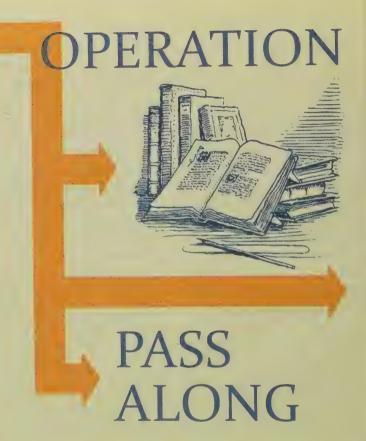
pious gestures was showing me the blessings that flow from them. The God whose grace was saving me by faith alone, inspired me to live as if my faith were really true. The stories of the saints' sacrifices are screaming at us across time and space. May we have ears to hear them and act, for the sake of our own souls and for the life of the world.

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CATHOLIC

THE REV. DANIEL CLARKE CHARLESTON, SC

he Book of Common Prayer is for Anglicans the norma normans of faith and practice, the Rule which standardizes all other rules, guides, confessions, or even altar guild manuals. In the Prayer of Consecration in the Holy Eucharist we read, "and did institute, and in his holy Gospel command us to continue, a perpetual memory of that his precious death and sacrifice until his coming again."

Few other statements in the Prayer Book cut to the chase quite as sharply as this one: at once the warrant for what Christians do in the Eucharist as well as for everything Christians do once they go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

We who have eaten the Body of Christ are sent out to become the Body of Christ in the world, to become the sacrifice, to become the love we have been given, have offered, and have eaten. This is the very anchor of the Christian mind, the banner over us who are sealed by the Holy Spirit and marked as Christ's own for ever

We call this prayer book approach "eucharistic living," living thankfully, gratefully, and thus living sacrificially, incarnating in ourselves all that has been offered for us, given to us, in Jesus Christ. A whole Christian moral vision has arisen from this nexus of sacrifice and service remembered in the liturgy, discerned in the eucharistic action itself, an exhortation to lives modeled on Jesus' perfect self-giving set forth there, to taking up our cross daily, joyfully. We dare even to say that from the Eucharist comes our whole recognition of the Christevent as redemptive for us:

revealing human meaning within the universe. No other rite, no other thought, no other thing in human history has more taught us who we are, serviceable beings, givers, than this bread-and-wine action. ordered in an upper room one Thursday night, and St. John's interpretation of it with towel and basin: "This is my Body which is given for you;" "if I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye ought also to wash one another's feet." Mutually shared life is the point and purpose of human beings alive in a limitless universe, love given, taken, and received. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends," Jesus taught. To what limits might such love lift us, and until what day? Humanity is measured by sacrificial Love. So might the universe be.

In our day this eucharistic understanding of human life lived for others is being displaced

increasingly within western culture by thoughts less Christian, less human. Friedrich Nietzsche and Oscar Wilde do not often appear in the same sentence, nor do their philosophies instantly occur to us as the yin and yang of a new modern mind distancing itself from its historic Judeo-Christian understanding of human purpose. Today "greater love than this" is deconstructed to read, "Pity makes suffering contagious." The public's superficial reading of Nietzsche labels him a gloomy "atheist" or "nihilist" (he may deserve it); the same forum laughs salaciously with the aesthete Wilde all the way to the bank. "To drift with every passion till my soul/Is a stringed lute on which all winds can play," seems perfectly Wildean, frivolous enough at a glance, but set next to Nietzache's "man is more ape than any ape...the overman is the meaning of the earth," reveal themselves as Dionysian chaos set against

Apollonian logic-disturbing antipodes to western culture's founding concept of eucharistic living, Jesus Christ the Everlasting Man himself the chief cornerstone, the point of existence. Neither "all" nor "nothing" means quite the same as "selflessness," but are rather its "sunny" or "shady" antitheses. Whatever Nietzsche and Wilde actually mean by their words, we take their meaning culturally as other than living sacrificially, as sorry dichotomies to a self-giving humanity —perhaps because we want to. And to what depths of despair must either alternative tend? Heresy is always cruel, beginning as a culture of light and revealed only later as a black hole. Catholic humanity is measured by sacrificial love. Oddly enough, so is divinity; and Oscar Wilde repented on his deathbed.

Passivity, in all its moral implications of passion, inaction, and omnivorous indulgence

so ironically set before us by the languid and easily tempted Oscar, and "uberactivity" —the will to power, to pulling ourselves up by the bootstraps—so darkly desired by Mr. Nietzsche, are both very ancient, very old-fashioned ideas rejected by a Christian world once formed, taught, and fed by the Eucharist. Is the sacrificial nature of human life less real to us because of the decentralized place of the eucharistic sacrifice in generic Protestantism, "classical" Anglicanism, and even in late 20th century Roman Catholicism? Are Friedrich Nietzsche and Oscar Wilde now become Scylla and Charybdis (or more aptly, perhaps, the Sirens) for the ever-expanding western mind, floating out from its altar-centered moorings on currents of pain or pleasure?

G.K. Chesterton wrote in *The Everlasting Man*, "On the third day the friends of Christ coming at daybreak to the place

found the grave empty and the stone rolled away. In varying ways they realized the new wonder; but even they hardly realized that the world had died in the night. What they were looking at was the first day of a new creation, with a new heaven and a new earth: and in a semblance of the gardener God walked again in the garden, in the cool, not of the evening but the dawn." Our world has been recreated in Jesus Christ, in whom sacrifice is service, service is love, and love is the point and pur-

pose of the universe. Even at the heart of the Triune God. sacrifice binds three persons in one Being. As men and women, our living that out is Trinitarian, eucharistic living. It is the whole goal of Lent just as it is the radiant blessing of Easter and the fiery challenge of Pentecost. It is the distilled essence of Everlasting Life, which we eat in the Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood, becoming sacrament ourselves, given, taken, eaten by a hungry universe that would be filled.

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The Rev. K. Brewster Hastings Abington, PA

By word and deed, Father Philip Shilongo of Saint Mary's Odibo Mission emulated the sacrificial love of Jesus.

It was July, 1978. Vincent, the secretary of the Anglican Diocese of Namibia, collected me from the airport of the capital city of Windhoek. We rode in his Nissan pick-up truck, the sun bright and relentless, the can of Coke I sipped, lukewarm. Vincent pointed out significant buildings of the city: the Governor's mansion, the UN headquarters, and barracks of the South African Defense Force (SADF). Almost every telephone pole or light post was festooned with campaign posters. The first free and fair election to select delegates to a constitutional assembly was several weeks away. Expectancy was in the air yet bridled by a caution and weariness; scars of thirty years of civil war do not heal easily.

Vincent drove the pick-up into the outskirts of Windhoek to Bishop Kauluma's home. The landscape was scrub desert, not a terrain to cross by foot, let alone at night. As if reporting the price of petrol, Vincent offhandedly told me, "When God made Namibia, he was angry." His words slapped the stupor of jet lag yet I could not find any words with which to reply.

After dinner at the Bishop's table, encircled with his wife Sally, their children, and several cousins and friends, I collapsed into bed. I reviewed my scant knowledge: Namibia, a former German colony, was

parceled off as a protectorate to South Africa in the settlement of World War I, with the eventual intention of becoming its own nation state. The British and Afrikaans of apartheid South Africa were loath to release the sparsely populated, mineral-rich land. A civil war began in the 1960s and in 1989, the United Nations was overseeing a transition to independence brokered by the US and USSR unceremoniously called Resolution 435. I was in Namibia as a member of a team of Anglicans assisting in the repatriation of refugees.

When Vincent and I left to drive up north to Ovamboland, the Bishop told me, "You will visit St. Mary's. Give Father Philip my greetings." The Nissan pick-up truck was packed for the ten-hour drive: three men up front, four of us crammed in the backseats; and six young guys riding tightly in the bed of the truck

with boxes of food and medical supplies. We were mostly quiet, bored, or sullen, the only distraction being the cassette of Jimmy Cliff playing, "The Harder They Come," over and over.

St. Mary's was situated less than a mile from the Angolan-Namibian border. It suffered from the crossfire of the civil war, as well as from incursions by soldiers of both sides in the war in Angola, a pawn in the chess game of the Cold War. The SADF was comprised of young grunts conscripted from the Afrikaans community in South Africa and led by career soldiers. They were notorious for their intimidation of civilians, destruction of property, and detention of local people. The SADF and the People Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN) played a cat-andmouse game, usually the former chasing the latter around the compass points of the

land. Engagements were sporadic and usually included the killing or capture of members of PLAN. On the grounds of the Mission was the largest church in the region, a school, and a home for orphans, as well as modest concrete block dormitories for staff, refugees, and guests. Many of the buildings were half destroyed by mortar fire. The electricity and running water had not worked for several months.

I wanted to meet Fr. Philip and learned from his wife Phoebe he was very sick and spent most of the day in bed. He had cancer and also suffered from the effects of torture inflicted during his several detentions by the SADF. Each time the fighting intensified in the area around St. Mary's, he would send his wife and children to Windhoek to stay with relatives. He kept the mission open to say the daily prayers, offer Sunday worship, tend the small

herd of goats, teach local villagers, and offer hospitality to anyone in need. His steadfast faith was a quiet thorn in the side of the SADF; thus they harassed him, tortured him and sought to break his resolve.

My last day at St. Mary's, I was allowed to visit Fr. Philip in his bedroom. With great effort, he leaned upward and sat on the edge of his bed. His voice was thin and weak. He spoke with pain and labored to tell me about the good and the bad times of the Mission. Some months, there were many children, happy to have a place to live, to learn, and to praise God. Other months, the place was desolate and seemingly forsaken. Once the SADF seized the herd of goats and even took all the chickens. the only source of food and income. Fr. Philip would eat millet until assistance arrived. days or sometimes weeks later. At one point, he confided,

"They also would take me." He then was quiet for a few minutes. He kept tightening and loosening his right fist and ran the fingers of his left hand across the other wrist. Perhaps he wanted me to leave. Maybe he was recalling an agony during a detention. It could simply have been a mannerism like rubbing your chin or scratching one's head.

Whatever the meaning, it was time to go. I relayed the bishop's greeting to Fr. Philip and thanked him profusely for this time and telling me about St. Mary's. Suddenly, a tiny kid goat came hopping through the doorway and pranced into the middle of the room. It moved about the space in a playful frolic, turning its neck and head as if to show off its ears, its hooves ticking hapoily on the concrete floor in a simple dance of jubilation. For the first time during the visit, Fr. Philip tilted his head owards me, met my eyes, and

offered a smile. He looked at the kid goat and chuckled. I took it as a sign from God. I saw the Lord rejoicing over Philip. His witness and ministry echoed the sacrifice of Jesus that sets us free. He was a faithful priest preparing for death as his people anticipated a new day for their nation.

[The Rev. Brewster Hastings is pastor of Saint Anne's Church, Abington, PA. His collection of short stories, A Certain Kind of Affection, is available from major online booksellers.]

THE WAY OF SUFFERING

The Rev. Jeremy W. Bergstrom Savannah, GA

> The Feast of St. Martin, Pope and Martyr

While Christ has promised us life, peace, and beatitude, there is no getting around the fact that we only obtain them by traveling the way of suffering and sacrifice. Israel must go through the desert before she reaches the Promised Land. Job has all stripped away before God blesses him beyond measure. Christ suffered before he entered into glory.

Christ of course suffered not out of his own need, but for us: "For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are sanctified" (Heb 10:14), and "we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (Heb 10:10).

The prophets are clear, the sacrificial rites of ancient Israel's Tabernacle and Solomon's Temple were bodily and temporal signs directing us to the true and spiritual sacrifice God hoped to work in his people towards their redemption from sin. "For I desire steadfast love and not sacrifice. the knowledge of God, rather than burnt offerings" (Hos 6:6). Such is David's meaning when he prophesies the work of Christ in Psalm 40, as rendered by the Epistle to the Hebrews:

Sacrifices and offerings thou has not desired, but a body has thou prepared for me; in burnt offerings and sin offerings thou hast taken no pleasure. Then I said, 'Lo, I have come to do thy will, O God,' as it is written of me in the roll of the book.

Through the sacrifice of his own body, which is the outward evidence of his inner, spiritual submission to the Father, Jesus Christ's obedi-

ence revealed the true nature of godly sacrifice when he uttered those powerful words in his passion: "not my will, but thine, be done" (Luke 22:42).

Baptism is the outward and visible sign given by God to witness to our own inward and invisible volitional sacrifice. and as such, is the preeminent image of our incorporation into Christ. "Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ... The death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus" (Rom 6:1-14).

Just as Israel was naïve in thinking the shedding of sacrificial blood on the altar truly satisfied the Lord, we too are naïve if we assume the physical act of our baptism pleases him apart from our daily, spirtual participation in the sacri-

fice of Christ it represents. In other words, Baptism is even more a vocation than a rite. Daily the Christian dies to sin and lives to righteousness (1 Pet 2:24), daily he dies to the law through the body of Christ, so that he may belong to another, to him who has been raised from the dead in order that he may bear fruit for God (Rom 7:4). This offering is the only "pleasing aroma" (Gen 8:21) in the nostrils of the Lord, "For we are the aroma of Christ to God among those who are being saved and among those who are perishing" (2 Cor 2:14).

To reinforce the sacrificial vocation indicated by our baptism, Christ and the Apostles have given us the Eucharist, in which "we offer and present unto thee, O Lord, our selves, our souls and bodies, to be a reasonable, holy, and living sacrifice unto thee." These are Cranmer's words, of course, which rightly retained their privileged place in the Eucharistic canon of the original Scottish and American prayer books, and emphasize the ultimate purpose of the Eucharist. Archbishop Cranmer himself makes a careful distinction, finding two sorts of sacrifice in the Scriptures: first, the "propitiatory or merciful" sacrifice of Christ, which was "once for all," of which the Eucharist is a memorial; second, there is the sacrifice offered up by the faithful, and these are "called sacrifices of laud, praise, and thanksgiving. The first kind of sacrifice Christ offered to God for us: the second kind we ourselves offer to God by Christ... by the second we offer ourselves and all that we have unto him and his Father. And this sacrifice generally is our whole obedience to God..." (Answer to Gardiner, Cox, 11).

In this, Cranmer shows himself to be a diligent student of the Church Fathers, including St. Augustine, who explains in the *City of God*, "in the sacrament of the church's sacrifice... the church, being the body of which [Christ] is the head, is taught to offer herself through him... To this supreme and true sacrifice all false sacrifices have yielded" (*civ.* X.20).

Such are the "means of grace" given to us, the gift of the sacraments offered by the church, that we might have the "hope of glory."

In the church year we have yet another grace supporting our baptismal vocation, and that is the penitential season of Lent and Holy Week. It is perhaps providential that these occur in the Spring, for this reminds us that the way of sacrifice is not really a season of loss, but a season of the beginnings of true and genuine growth in love. We dedicate ourselves to prayer, fasting, and almsgiving in Lent not in order to learn to

do without, but to increase our desire for that which is greater and endures forever. We must sacrifice the inferior to obtain that which is infinitely good. I suspect that, in hindsight, the saints in heaven look back at their earthly sacrifices and see not so much pain as prudence; what they experienced as suffering in this life will then be revealed as glory.

SHOULDERING THE LOAD

THE REV. EVAN D. GARNER DECATUR, AL

realled a colleague to ask him if he could fill in for I me at an upcoming meeting. We spoke for a while about what each of us had been up to, and I mentioned that Elizabeth and I had recently served on a Cursillo staff together. "How was that?" he asked, having been to Cursillo as a pilgrim but not yet had the opportunity to serve on staff. "It was great!" I quickly replied. "It is one of the few ways that Elizabeth and I get to share ministry. Usually, I am up front in church while she is sitting in the back with our kids or downstairs teaching Sunday School while I am upstairs leading a class. For once, we were able to do something together in the church, and I loved it."

After we hung up, I thought more about that weekendabout how good it felt to end each day having worked nonstop alongside my spouse and, more importantly, having shared that work with two-dozen other people. So often in ordained ministry, the clergyperson is given a specific role to fill—one that seems to belong to him or her alone. We stand at the altar and preach from the pulpit, while everyone else remains quietly in a pew. Sure, there are certain tasks that are reserved for ordained persons, but they are far outnumbered by the opportunities for ministry that are shared by all of God's people. My weekend at Cursillo reminded me just how fabulous the church can be when everyone shares the same mission and helps shoulder the load together.

Urging the church in Corinth to honor the ministry of all baptized persons, Paul wrote, "For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ... For the body does not consist of one member but of many. If the foot should say, 'Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,' that would not make it any less a part of the body. And if the ear should say, 'Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body, that would not make it any less a part of the body" (1 Cor. 12:12, 14-16). It seems that some of the Corinthians were stuck on the sidelines, claiming that they were not important enough to take a leadership role in the church, but Paul wanted them to see how every member of the body had a job to do.

Two thousand years later, we struggle with the same issue. Setting up for receptions? That's someone else's job. Teaching Sunday school? I could never do that. Visiting

home-bound parishioners? They don't want to see me. Comforting a widow after the death of her husband? I don't know how to do that. Calling someone who has not come to church in a while? But the minister is supposed to do that. Sure, not everyone is called to be a pastor or a teacher or an administrator, but everyone is called to do something. We are all in this together because we are all the body of Christ.

Do you see yourself as an important, fully-functioning member of the body of Christ? Nothing gives me greater joy than making a hospital visit and bumping into a parishioner who has just finished checking on the same person I have come to see. My heart swells with pride when I get a thank you note from someone who is grateful for the meals our parishioners have delivered during an illness. Like a bottle of wine or a roller coaster ride, ministry is best when

shared. The greatest privilege of a clergyperson isn't standing alone at the altar or looking down on a congregation from the pulpit. The best part of my job is helping everyone else work together for the good of the whole church.

What role do you play in the congregation? What ministry do you bring to the community? Are you an usher? Do you deliver flowers to shutins? Will you fix a meal for a grieving family? Will you write a note of encouragement to a sick parishioner? Instead of waiting for someone else to come and pick up the load, shoulder a part of it yourself. Stop calling other people and telling them what needs to be done, and begin looking for ways to do it yourself. We are the body of Christ. We are his hands and his feet. If we are going to bring Christ's presence into the world, it will take every last one of us to do it.

THE GREATEST BEAUTY

THE REV. CANON EMILY HYLDEN COLUMBIA, SC

"But who made those statues? Where are their names?" My students were relentless. I'd deflected and avoided the question a few times already, but they were clearly not going to let me out of it. We were studying the modern-day equivalent of a slide carousel—my Power Point presentation of iPhone photos snapped on a vacation the past summer.

With my husband, I'd driven the back roads of France, pilgrimaging from cathedral to cathedral, sitting in the chilly, semi-dark, stone spaces, letting the centuries of prayers soak into my being. In another chilly, semi-dark space the following autumn, between the Sunday morning liturgies, I revisited the sojourn with my adult Sunday School class, eager to share with them the wonder and renewal I'd experienced.

As we traveled together by photo through the aisles and transepts of Gothic holy places, studying the stained glass, contemplating the detailed work of each façade, the question came again and again: "Who carved those stones?" and "What artist created these windows?" Some initials were carved into the bases of statues; some windows' creators could be identified by their style, a mark, or perhaps by a written receipt, if it had been an offering from a particular guild or family for the sake of the cathedral community. Overwhelmingly, though, the names and identities of the artisans are lost to time. This was upsetting to my students. These craftsmen devoted their lives (some literally lost their lives) to the construction of the cathedral, and yet their

work was effectively anonymous.

To the modern person, this might seem like a grave injustice. Much of our lives seem to depend on our notoriety. How many followers do vou have on Twitter? How many people commented on your instagram post? How many hits did your latest blog post receive? Outside of social media, to how many parties were you invited last season? How many Christmas cards did you receive? We build our lives in order to be recognized, noticed, known, beloved. This is not all bad. Humans are made to live in community, to thrive on being understood and loved. Something Medieval artisans knew, though, was that God is the only one who can truly love and understand each of us on the deepest, most intimate, and fulfilling level. To seek after lesser loves and to grasp after lesser glories for

ourselves is, finally, less than human.

What the stained glass artists, the sculptors, and stone masons knew, what saints throughout time have known and lived, is that our greatest end is to glorify God-not to be remembered for our own names or to build up our own Towers of Babel. We do not know the names of every stonemason or every benefactor of the Cathedral of Amiens, or of Chartres, or of Reims: we know instead the witness of those buildings and the towns out of which they were born. The people built not for their own glory, they sought not Babel, but for the glory of God, seeking instead the New Jerusalem. Since the Middle Ages, such great stone testaments to God's activity in humanity have not come to fruition.

In these seasons of Lent and Easter, the witness of our brothers (and a few sisters, surely) almost a millennium ago have much to show us about what it means to live our lives as a sacrifice to God. I've always thought we lost something when we gave up animal sacrifice in our liturgies. Our worship services are less dramatic, even bordering sometimes on the blasé. But don't our holy, artistic forebears show us by their anonymous examples that the most potent offering, the most powerful sacrifice (always, only, in response, of course, to Jesus Christ's life, death, and resurrection) is a life lived so in the example of, so to the glory of, so in the shadow of God's manifestation in Jesus Christ, that a person is known only by their offering itself?

In an age of brass plaques plaguing the halls and walls of our parishes, named and endowed speakerships clogging our calendars, and constant memorials printed and prayed Sunday by Sunday, perhaps there's something to be said for the quiet lives of Medieval Cathedral artists, people whose lives were so quiet as to make their work resound throughout centuries.

Clearly, the motivation of these gifted saints triumphant was to pour their lives, labors, and very selves out as a fragrant and pleasing offering to our Lord. There is a famous story of the back side of the organ loft at a very well-known church in France: an organist and choirmaster took his young charges back to examine the side of the casing turned toward the wall: the group found fine, detailed carvings—as excellent as any exposed piece of wood in the whole of the building. The teacher exhorted his students to remember that God sees every effort taken on his behalf, whether any other person ever notices its existence

May we so live our lives that we ourselves may be like those great stained glass windows of Chartres Cathedral—our greatest beauty is exposed not in and of ourselves, but when the light shines through us.

EASTER

Rise heart; thy Lord is risen.

By George Herbert

Sing his praise
without delays,
Who takes thee by the hand,
that thou likewise
with him mayst rise:
That, as his death calcined
thee to dust,
His life may make thee gold,
and much more just.

Awake, my lute, and struggle for thy part with all thy art. The cross taught all wood to resound his name, who bore the same. His stretched sinews taught all strings, what key

Is best to celebrate this most high day.

Consort both heart and lute, and twist a song pleasant and long:
Or since all music is but three parts vied and multiplied;

O let thy blessed Spirit bear a part, And make up our defects with his sweet art.

I got me flowers
to straw thy way:
I got me boughs
off many a tree:
But thou wast up
by break of day,
And brought'st thy sweets
along with thee.

The Sun arising in the East,
Though he give light,
and th'East perfume;
If they should offer to contest
With thy arising,
they presume.

Can there be any day but this,
Though many suns
to shine endeavour?
We count three hundred,
but we miss:
There is but one,
and that one ever.

IT IS FINISHED

The Rev. Steve Lawler Ferguson, MO

"It is finished" John 19:30 [Good Friday sermon based on John 18:1 - 19:42]

With these words, Jesus completes something of his life's purposes. He accomplishes part of his mission. And, he lets go of the now for what's next. His story is not completed, but his time living and breathing on the cross now ends.

In this life we too have major moments. We work hard and complete projects. We love our family and friends, and are graced to have that love returned. We give to our congregations and communities as faithful people. Yet we live with the gnawing feeling that we have not accomplished enough. We stay a step or two removed from our deeper

lives, and so we often disparage what we are doing or what we have done. There are as the Book of Common Prayer so succinctly says, "things done and left undone". We rarely have the sense of completeness that Jesus had at the moment when he proclaims "It is finished."

Soren Kierkegaard names our dilemma when he writes, "Life can only be understood backwards; but it must be lived forwards." We look backward and we see themes, incidents, and phases. We don't see our lives in the context of where we are headed. Hindsight may be 20/20, but only if we forget that memories and truth are not the same.

It is here that the humanity of Jesus is the greatest guide to us in our incompleteness, in our brokenness, in the messiness of our lives. Jesus had many of these moments when his completeness stands in

stark contrast to the brokenness all around him. He walks on choppy water, he makes a little bit of food more than enough, and he travels, teaches, and heals with a group of followers who will at the critical moment of his betrayal become completely driven by fear and whose leader will answer, "I do not know him." He responds to these moments with the faithful clarity of God's active presence in the midst of the incomplete. No avoidance, no resisting, no waiting for later to live the faithful now

Many people, then and now, dismiss Jesus for the way he responded. From the very beginning of his earthly life, Jesus seemed to be off track. He wasn't born from a woman who was an earthly queen. He was not swathed in royal purple. He did not raise an army, build a palace, amass wealth or even leave much of an imprint with those outside of his

friends and followers, except a scant mention in the historian Josephus' *Antiquities of the Jews*. Jesus did not offer what was expected even though expectations for him were set by incompleteness.

Viewed from any outside perspective, the trajectory for Jesus in Holy Week is from Palm Sunday and all the adulation, through Maundy Thursday with his close friends, to the loneliness of the Garden with even fewer friends, to his time alone, dying on the cross; beaten, betrayed, and drawing his last breath. Short of Easter, he leaves more questions than clear answers. He was in the usual human sense a failure. If we wrote his obituary at the end of the day we call Good Friday, we could mention no truly faithful friends, maybe somewhere a couple of followers, and a devastated mother left behind. He was no one's hero and no one's idea of the man of the hour. We could imagine his friends saying, "He died too early. He had so much more to give." We cannot imagine them understanding that he had finished something so important. At the moment of his saying, "It is finished," it is Jesus' availability, living a complete faithfulness, that is the great work of this moment. We see it in his faithfulness and in his sacrificial love. He may have writhed in pain and wilted in exhaustion, but he did not once try to escape this moment. With his arms wide open, crying out, "It is finished," he shows how far God goes to take on our worst to show us his best.

Jesus is still before us with his arms wide open. He took the nails and accepted the suffering and showed that no matter what we throw at him, no matter how completely we betray him, batter or crucify him, he is not finished with us. In fact, in many ways, this

moment shows how he was just beginning.

What is finished at this moment is his life as simply a great teacher, healer, friend, and son. What goes away are the limited and very human ways we understand Jesus and what he is alive to do. Like the disciples, at this moment we still struggle to know the Jesus who is beyond our self-interested sense of him. This is the way for those of us who follow the Way of the Cross, we see dimly over and over again. It will take Resurrection and Pentecost before we can see face-to-face that our endings are next steps on the path in following Jesus.

Jesus cries out, "It is finished," and we sit in silence, our vision of who he needs to be dying and our glimpse of who he really is awaiting us at sunrise as we approach the empty tomb. Amen.

DEATHS

THE REV. FLOYD A. ADAMS, JR., 93, in Palm Coast, FL.

A World War II veteran and graduate of the Philadelphia Divinity School, he was ordained a Priest in 1964 and served parishes in Pennsylvania and Florida.

THE VERY REV. ROGER SCOTT GRAY, 90, in Indianapolis, IN.

He was a World War II veteran who served in the Army Chaplains Corp and a graduate of General Theological Seminary. He served parishes in Connecticut and New York before becoming Dean of Christ Church Cathedral, Indianapolis, in 1972. He retired as Dean Emeritus on January 1, 1990.

THE REV. CANON ANNA STEWART POWELL, 69, in Southampton, NJ.

A graduate of General Theological Seminary, she was ordained in 1984 and served as Priest at St. Martin-in-the-Fields, Lumberton, New Jersey, until retiring in 2012. She was a canon for Trinity Cathedral of the Episcopal Diocese of New Jersey in Trenton.

THE REV. MANNEY REID, 91, in Pawleys Island, SC.

A World War II veteran and graduate of Virginia Theological Seminary, he was ordained in 1951 and served parishes in Tennessee, Arizona, North Carolina, and South Carolina.

THE RT. REV. CREIGHTON LELAND ROBERTSON, 70, in Sioux Falls, SD.

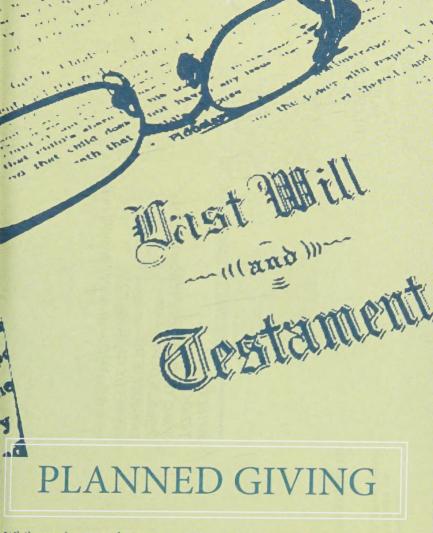
A 1989 graduate of the University of the South, Sewanee, he was ordained in 1990 and

elected ninth Bishop of South Dakota in 1994. In 2001, the University of the South awarded him an Honorary Doctorate of Divinity. He retired in 2009.

THE RT. REV. M. THOMAS SHAW, SSJE, 69, in West Newbury, MA.

A graduate of General Theological Seminary, he was ordained in 1971. In 1975, he entered the Society of St. John the Evangelist and was life professed in 1981. He served a term as its Superior, beginning in 1983, during which he established the retreat center at Emery House in West Newbury, and began Cowley Publications. In 1995, he became the fifteenth Bishop of Massachusetts, serving until retiring in 2014.

Rest eternal grant unto them O Lord, and let light perpetual shine upon them.



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